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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 BEIRUT 000523

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NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/YERGER, STATE FOR NEA/ELA,

EO 12958 DECL: 04/16/2018
TAGS PTER, ECPS, PINR, LE, IR, SY
SUBJECT: LEBANON: HIZBALLAH GOES FIBER OPTIC

REF: BEIRUT 490

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Michele Sison for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

SUMMARY

1. (S) Requesting a special meeting with Charge, Telecommunications Minister Marwan Hamadeh decried the establishment of a complete fiber optic network. GOL HAS BEEN SHARING HIZBALLAH FIBER OPTIC MAP, REPORT WIDELY

2. (S) "Iran Telecom is taking over the country!" were the first words out of the mouth of Minister of Telecommunications Marwan Hamadeh when discussing interference in telecoms linked to network.

3. (S) While the confrontation over the FiOS system was taking place with Hizballah, mobile telecommunications were being subject to interference. BEIRUT 00000523 002 OF 004
the interference, in an arc that runs from the north to the south of Lebanon.

MARCH 14 NEEDS TO MEET, BUT SAAD SHOULD BE THERE

4. (S) Hamadeh said that he, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Elias Murr are all danger, but he and Murr will take the biggest risk. HIZBALLAH RESPONSE - DON'T TOUCH!

5. (S) Hamadeh reported that LAF G-2 Brigadier General Georges Khoury and ISF Major General Ashraf Rifi saw Wafiq Safa, the Hizballah liaison. HIZBALLAH ASSERTIONS UNTRUE

6. (S) Hamadeh believes both Hizballah assertions to be untrue. He refutes the Hizballah claim that the system exists solely to give them defensive work done under various forms of cover.

7. (S) To complete the installations and at the same time stay below the radar, Hamadeh says that Hizballah has used the municipalities to issue a discovery and report.

8. (S) The first official report was from the region of Chouifat, which reported installation of an unknown fiber optic system, and asked the Minister of the Interior to stop it. No one did anything. BEIRUT 00000523 003 OF 004
FUNDING FROM IRAN

9. (S) The current installations, as per the map Hamadeh has given us, shows lines running from Beirut, around both sides of the airport, into a strategic victory.

10. (S) Hamadeh highlights the system as a strategic victory for Iran, since it creates an important Iranian outpost in Lebanon, bypassing Syrian border. HAMADEH PREPARES INTERNAL CAMPAIGN

11. (S) Meanwhile, Hamadeh is preparing a "very strong" internal campaign. This campaign, he said, has the potential to "destroy" Aoun and Mohamad

12. (S) Comment: Last year, when Hamadeh's telecommunications ministry "discovered" the well-known Hizballah telephone system, including the 1000 numbers. BEIRUT 00000523 004 OF 004
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